

(E.O.) 12432, Minority Business Enterprise Development, and E.O. 12138, Women-Owned Business Enterprise Development.

OSDBU develops policy to enhance the utilization of small, minority, and women-owned small businesses in the contract and program opportunities of USDA. It analyzes procurement trends and develops initiatives to improve contract awards to small, minority, and women-owned small businesses. It provides outreach to raise awareness and solicit small business interest in USDA programs, and it monitors and reports the percentage of contract awards by USDA to small, minority, and women-owned businesses.

OSDBU's goal is to provide information, guidance, and technical assistance to ensure continuous growth in the rate of small business participation in USDA programs and procurements.

If you are interested in business opportunities with the Department of Agriculture, visit our web site at [www.usda.gov/da/smallbus.html](http://www.usda.gov/da/smallbus.html) or call (202) 720-7117 for more details.

### Office of Ethics

The Office of Ethics was created in 1998 to direct and coordinate the ethics programs within the various mission areas of the Department and to service headquarters staff directly. The Office develops departmentwide policies and regulations; provides training to USDA staff on the various rules governing employee conduct, conflicts of interest, and political activity; administers personal financial disclosure reporting by senior staff; and counsels employees on these matters. Over the past year, the Office has invested heavily in Internet technology to provide online training modules for USDA staff stationed all over the world, and was the first Federal agency to offer disclosure reporting through a secure online, web-based system. In addition to USDA staff, employees from other Federal agencies and the public have accessed the ethics web site located at [www.usda.gov/ethics](http://www.usda.gov/ethics)

### Office of Outreach

The Office of Outreach provides overall leadership and coordination to assure that all potential customers have full access to all USDA programs and services. In conjunction with other USDA agencies, special emphasis is directed toward underserved populations. The Office administers the Outreach for Socially Disadvantaged Farmers Program, authorized by Section 2501 of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990.

## ■ Office of the Chief Economist

The Office of the Chief Economist advises the Secretary of Agriculture on policies and programs affecting U.S. agriculture and rural areas. This advice includes assessments of USDA program proposals, legislative proposals, and economic developments of importance to agriculture and rural areas. In addition, the Office of the Chief Economist is responsible for several programs, described below, that coordinate activities across USDA agencies.

The World Wide Web address for the Office of the Chief Economist is <http://www.usda.gov/oce/>

## World Agricultural Outlook Board

The World Agricultural Outlook Board is USDA's focal point for forecasts and projections of global commodity markets. Each month the Board brings together interagency committees of experts to forecast the supply, use, and prices of major commodities in the United States and abroad. The committees also clear agricultural forecasts published by other USDA agencies. This teamwork ensures that USDA forecasts are objective and consistent.

Because the weather is vital to crop forecasts, specialists from the Board work side by side with weather forecasters from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to monitor the weather and assess its effect on crops. Their work provides timely information on potential changes in global production.

The Board also coordinates departmentwide activity on long-term economic projections, remote sensing, and climate. The Department is one of the largest users of remote sensing in the Federal Government. The Board coordinates remote sensing activities at USDA and chairs the Department's Remote Sensing Coordination Committee. The Board also hosts the Department's Chief Meteorologist, who serves as the principle spokesperson on weather and climate issues and chairs a departmental weather and climate coordinating committee.

The World Wide Web address for the World Agricultural Outlook Board is <http://www.usda.gov/oce/waob/index.htm>

## Office of Risk Assessment and Cost-Benefit Analysis

This office is responsible for coordinating, reviewing, and approving all risk assessments and cost-benefit analyses of mitigation measures associated with major regulations of the Department. Major regulations are economically significant (with an impact of at least \$100 million each year) and have a primary effect on human health, human safety, or the environment. The office provides direction to USDA agencies on appropriate methods for these analyses and serves as a focal point on matters relating to risk assessment in interagency reviews.

The World Wide Web address for the Office of Risk Assessment and Cost-Benefit Analysis is <http://www.usda.gov/oce/oracba/index.htm>

## Agricultural Labor Affairs

The coordinator of agricultural labor affairs is responsible for coordinating USDA's agricultural labor policy. Areas of concern include immigration, the H-2A Temporary Agricultural Worker Program, worker protection standards for pesticide use, farm labor supply, and agricultural employment issues.

The World Wide Web address for this office is <http://www.usda.gov/oce/oce/labor-affairs/affairs.htm>

## Sustainable Development

OCE's director of sustainable development works to integrate the principals of sustainable development into the Department's policies and programs, ensuring that economic, social, and environmental considerations are balanced in decisionmaking. The director also directs and coordinates the Department's domestic and international policies and programs in sustainable development, including sustainable agriculture, forestry, and rural communities.

The World Wide Web address for this office is <http://www.usda.gov/oce/osfsd/index.htm>

## Global Change Program Office

Global climate change, whether from natural causes or human activity, could have important consequences for farming, forestry, and rural areas. The Global Change Program Office functions as the USDA-wide coordinator of global change program and policy issues facing the Department. The Office coordinates activities with other agencies, interacts with the legislative branch on climate change issues, and represents USDA in international climate change discussions. It also is a source of objective assessment of the economic effects of climate change and proposed mitigation strategies on agriculture and forestry.

The World Wide Web address for this office is <http://www.usda.gov/oce/oce/gcpo/index.htm>

## Office of Energy Policy and New Uses

The Office of Energy Policy and New Uses assists with development of departmental energy policy and coordination of departmental energy programs and strategies. The Office provides economic analysis on energy policy issues, coordinates USDA energy-related activities within and outside the Department, and studies the feasibility of new uses of agricultural products.

The World Wide Web address for this office is <http://www.usda.gov/oce/oepnu/index.htm>

## ■ Office of Inspector General

USDA's Office of Inspector General (OIG), the first civilian OIG in the Federal Government, was established in 1962 and became fully operational in 1963. OIG conducts and supervises audits and evaluations, as well as investigations and law enforcement efforts relating to USDA's programs and operations. It provides leadership and coordination and recommends policies for activities that will prevent and detect fraud and abuse and promote economy, efficiency, and effectiveness in USDA programs and operations. Furthermore, OIG keeps the Secretary and Congress fully informed of problems and deficiencies related to administration of USDA programs and operations, and of the actions designed to correct such problems and deficiencies.